CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for hiding peer devices from a computer host, said devices and host sharing a common electrical bus, said method comprising:

generating a signal indicative of the presence of a first peer device; and

hiding a second peer device from said host so that said second device is controlled by said first peer device whenever said signal indicates the presence of said first device.

2. The method for hiding devices of claim 1 wherein said hiding step comprises, in response to said signal indicative of the presence of said first device, masking a host device select signal generally supplied by the host to said second peer device.

3. The method for hiding devices of claim 2 further comprising propagating a bus grant signal wherein said bus grant signal is configured to grant exclusive control rights to said first peer device over said second peer device.

4. The method for hiding peer devices of claim 1 wherein said electrical bus comprises a peripheral connect interface bus.

5. The method for hiding peer devices of claim 4 wherein said first peer device comprises a RAID processor.

6. The method for hiding peer devices of claim 5 wherein said second peer device comprises an I/O controller.

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7.   The method for hiding peer devices of claim 6 wherein said I/O controller is embedded in a motherboard of the host.

8.   The method for hiding peer devices of claim 7 wherein said
5   RAID processor is disposed on an add-in card.

9.   The method for hiding peer devices of claim 1 further comprising passing the host device select signal from the host to the second peer device in the absence of said first peer device.

10.   A method for hiding devices from a computer host, said devices and host sharing a common electrical bus, said method comprising:

providing one or more expansion slots configured to receive a respective add-in card including a processor therein;

generating a signal indicative of the presence of said add-in card in
15   one of the expansion slots;

in response to said signal indicative of the presence of said add-in card, masking a host device select signal generally used by said host to assert control of a controller on the motherboard of said host; and

propagating a bus grant signal configured to grant control rights to
20   the processor on said add-in card, in lieu of said host, over said controller.

11.   The method for hiding devices of claim 10 wherein said electrical bus comprises a peripheral connect interface bus.

25   12.   The method for hiding devices of claim 11 wherein said the processor on said add-in card comprises a RAID processor.

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13.   The method for hiding devices of claim 12 wherein said controller on the motherboard of the host comprises an I/O controller.

14.   The method for hiding devices of claim 10 further comprising passing the host device select signal from the host to the second peer device in the absence of said first peer device.

15.   A circuit for hiding peer devices from a computer host, said devices and host sharing a common electrical bus generally controlled by said host, said circuit comprising:
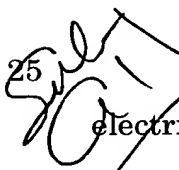
a generating module configured to supply a signal indicative of the presence of a first peer device; and

a hiding module configured to hide a second peer device from said host so that said second device is controlled by said first peer device whenever said signal indicates the presence of said first peer device.

16.   The circuit for hiding peer devices of claim 15 wherein said hiding module comprises:

a masking module coupled to receive said signal indicative of the presence of said first device to mask a host device select signal generally supplied by the host to said second peer device; and

a propagating module configured to propagate a bus grant signal wherein said bus grant signal is configured to grant control rights to said first peer device over said second peer device.

17.   The circuit for hiding peer devices of claim 15 wherein said electrical bus comprises a peripheral connect interface bus.

18.   The circuit for hiding peer devices of claim 17 wherein said first peer device comprises a RAID processor.

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19.   The circuit for hiding peer devices of claim 18 wherein said second peer device comprises an I/O controller.

20.   The circuit for hiding peer devices of claim 19 wherein said
5   I/O controller is embedded in a motherboard of the host.

21.   The circuit for hiding peer devices of claim 20 wherein said RAID processor is disposed on an add-in card.

10   22.   The circuit for hiding peer devices of claim 15 wherein said masking module is further configured to pass the host select signal from the host to the second peer device in the absence of said first peer device.

23.   The circuit of claim 16 wherein said propagating module
15   comprises a flip-flop.

24.   The circuit of claim 16 wherein said masking module comprises a plurality of switches.

20   25.   The circuit of claim 16 wherein said masking module comprises a plurality of logical gates.

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